

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY LISBON

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 173576

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SCUL, PFOR

SUBJECT: PRESENTATION OF PERFORMING ARTS IN PORTUGAL

REF: LISBON 3827

1. DIRECT RESPONSE TO REFTEL WILL BE SUBJECT SEPTTEL.

2. DEPT HAS APPROVED IN PRINCIPLE TYPE OF HIGH VISIBILITY
ACTIVITY REPRESENTED BY PERFORMING ART PRESENTATIONS
REQUESTED REFTEL. WE ARE LEFT WITH SEVERAL QUESTIONS, HOW-
EVER, TO WHICH WE DO NOT HAVE ADEQUATE ANSWERS:

A. GIVEN CURRENT POLITICAL TURMOIL, ARE THERE ANY CONCERNS
FOR SAFETY OF PERFORMING ARTISTS?

B. WHAT KIND OF THEATRES ARE AVAILABLE, AND HOW MUCH NOTICE
IS REQUIRED TO PLACE A PERFORMING ARTIST OR GROUP?

C. HAS CURRENT POLITICAL TURMOIL HAD ANY (OR MAJOR) EFFECT
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ON TYPE OF AUDIENCE WHICH CAN BE EXPECTED?

D. YOUR LIST OF ARTISTS IS VERY BROAD, RANGING FROM CLASSICAL TO MOST POPULAR, CONTEMPORARY MUSIC, FROM CHAMBER

MUSICIANS TO JAZZ AND FOLK GROUPS. THIS RAISES QUESTION AS TO NATURE OF AUDIENCE WE ARE TRYING TO REACH AND MESSAGE WE ARE TRYING TO CONVEY. IS IT SOLELY THAT WE, LIKE SOVIETS, ARE ABLE TO MOUNT CULTURAL PRESENTATIONS? IS IT DESIGNED TO ENGENDER POPULARITY CONTEST BETWEEN OUR PRESENTATIONS AND THOSE OF SOVIET BLOC? IS IT TO LET PORTUGUESE KNOW THAT WE ARE AWARE OF THEIR PLIGHT, SOMEWHAT AKIN TO OUR ATTITUDE TOWARDS BERLINERS DURING VARIOUS CRISES? OR IS THERE YET ANOTHER PURPOSE WHICH NEEDS ELUCIDATION? ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS WILL HELP US MAKE CHOICES AND ASSIST US IN MAKING MOST JUDICIOUS USE OF SCARCE RESOURCES.

3. WE SHOULD ALSO LIKE TO HAVE YOUR VIEW OF EXPECTED REACTION BY PORTUGUESE PEOPLE TO SUDDEN, LARGE SCALE INFUX OF AMERICAN PERFORMING ARTISTS. HOW LARGE IS THE DANGER THAT THEY WILL SEE IT, AS WAS THE CASE IN GREECE DURING PERIOD OF JUNTA FOR EXAMPLE, AS AN AMERICAN ENDORSEMENT OF PRESENT REGIME? WE WOULD THINK THAT IS MESSAGE SOVIET UNION IS TO SOME EXTENT TRYING TO CONVEY. IF WE APPEAR TO CONVEY SAME MESSAGE, WHAT DO WE GAIN IN OUR LONG-RANGE GOAL OF ESTABLISHING IN PORTUGAL NON-COMMUNIST, MULTI-PARTY SOCIETY WHICH IS PRO-NATO ORIENTED? IS THERE SOME WAY TO AVOID CONVEYING THIS MESSAGE -- ARE THERE, FOR EXAMPLE, THEATRES IN WHICH PERFORMERS CAN APPEAR THAT AUTOMATICALLY CONVEY OPPOSITION TO, OR CERTAINLY NON-ENDORSEMENT OF, REGIME? WE REALIZE THESE MAY BE DIFFICULT QUESTIONS TO ANSWER BUT HIGH VISIBILITY ACTIVITIES MAY CARRY WITH THEM A POLITICAL IMPACT WHICH MAKES IT DESIRABLE THAT WE ASK THESE QUESTIONS NOW RATHER THAN LATER. KISSINGER

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